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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /067 W
----------230834 008398 /21
R 230745Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5633
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JAPAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 2510

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: JA, PH, PFOR
SUBJ: FURTHER SPECULATION REGARDING JAPAN-CHINA PEACE AND FRIEND-SHIP TREATY (PFT)

REF: TOKYO 1440

SUMMARY: JAPAN-CHINA RELATIONS RETURNED TO TOKYO HEADLINES THIS WEEK WITH FLURRY OF SPECULATION THAT FUKUDA GOVERNMENT WAS ABOUT TO MOVE DECISIVELY FOR CONSLUSION OF PFT PRIOR TO THIS SUMMER'S UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS. THUS FAR, HOWEVER, SPECULATION HAS PROVEN TO BE EMPTY -- BOTH JAPANESE AND CHINESE APPEAR TO BE PREOCCUPIED WITH MORE PRESSING CONCERNS THAN PFT. END SUMMARY.

1. HOME FROM PEKING ON CONSULTATIONS, AMBASSADOR HEISHIRO OGAWA BRIEFED PM FUKUDA ON PRC SITUATION FEBRUARY 20, AFTER WHICH HE REMARKED TO PRESS THAT HE HAD RECOMMENDED EARLY CONCLUSION OF PFT
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TO PM. CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA TOLD REPORTERS THAT OGAWA WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO INFORM CHINESE OF PM FUKUDA'S "PROSITIVE RESOLVE" TO NEGOTIATE PFT ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES.

2. YOMIURI, HOWEVER, EXPANDED ON THESE ON-RECORD STATEMENTS WITH COMMENTS OF UNDISCLOSED "GOVERNMENT SOURCE" THAT FUKUDA HAD DE-CIDED AT MEETING WITH OGAWA TO SEEK CONSLUSION OF PFT BEFORE UPPER

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HOUSE ELECTIONS IN JULY IN HOPES OF IMPROVING LDP'S ELECTORAL FORTUNES. YOMIURI'S SOURCE STATED THAT MIYAZAWA FOUR POINTS WOULD BE DROPPED AND FONMIN HATOYAMA WOULD SOON TRAVEL TO PEKING IN EFFORT TO ACCELERATE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. BOTH FUKUDA AND HATOYAMA QUICKLY DENIED YOMIURI STORY. FONMIN TOLD PRESS THAT OGAWA'S VIEWS ON EARLY PFT DID NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT FONOFF POSITION AND THAT DIET AND SUMMIT SCHEDULE PRECLUDED HIS OWN TRAVELS TO PEKING IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE. FUKUDA OBSERVED TO REPORTERS THAT HE WAS TO BUSY TO THINK ABOUT JAPAN-CHINA TREATY, BEING PREOCCUPIED WITH BUDGET BEFORE DIET. IN RESPONSE TO KOMEITO QUESTION DURING FEBRUARY 22 DIET INTERPELLATIONS, PM ADMITTED THAT GOVERNMENT HAD NOT YET DECIDED UPON SPECIFIC PLAN FOR FUTURE PFT NEGOTIATIONS WITH CHINESE.

4. AMBASSADOR OGAWA'S FEBRUARY 14 DINNER MEETING WITH PRC FONMIN HUANG HUA AND VICE FONMIN HAN NIEN-LUNG IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO HIS RETURN TO TOKYO TOUCHED OFF SPECULATION THAT OGAWA HAD CARRIED SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM CHINESE TO FUKUDA. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, FONOFF CHINA DEPDIR IKEDA DISMISSED THIS RUMOR AS BASELESS. HE CHARACTERIZED OGAWA'S DINNER WITH HUANG, HAN AND THEIR WIVES AS ALMOST ENTIRELY SOCIAL WITH VERY LITTLE SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATION. ACCORDING TO OGAWA'S ACCOUNT OF DINNER, HUANG HAD BEEN RELAXED AND AMIABLE THROUGHOUT EVENING WITH ONE EXCEPTION. WHEN OGAWA DREW HUANG ASIDE TO ASK IF HE HAD ANY SPECIAL COMMENTS OGAWA COULD CARRY BACK TO TOKYO, HUANG "TENSED UP", NOTED HE HAD NOTHING TO ADD TO CHAIRMAN HUA'S PREVIOUS STATEMENTS ON PFT, AND QUICKLY MOVED CONVERSATION BACK TO SOCIAL CHIT-CHAT. IKEDA READ HUANG'S COMMENTS (OR LACK OF THEM) AS CONFIRMATION THAT SINO-JAPANESE AFFAIRS WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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LOW PRIORITY FOR CHINESE LEADERSHIP, WHO WERE UNPREPARED FOR PRESENT TO GO BEYOND EVEN MOST BASIC BOILERPLATE ON PFT.

5. YUGOSLAV POLCOUNS TOLD EMBOFF FEBRUARY 22 THAT LOCAL CHINESE EMBASSY HAS EXPRESSED INCREASING ANNOYANCE WITH FUKUDA GOVERNMENT OVER PAST WEEKS. IN CONVERSATION EARLIER THAT DAY, PRC CHARGE HAD TOLD YUGOSLAV THAT GOJ'S REITERATION OF ITS "POSITIVE RESOLVE" TO NEGOTIATE TREATY REPRESENTED FINE WORDS BUT DID NOT MEAN VERY MUCH. JAPANESE LEADERSHIP, CHARGE REPORTEDLY WENT ON, REMAINED OVERLY CONCERNED WITH POSSIBLE SOVIET REACTIONS. CHARGE CONCLUDED SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION OF PFT WAS UNLIKELY IN FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR.
SHOESMITH

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FURTHER SPECULATION REGARDING JAPAN-CHINA PEACE AND FRIEND- SHIP TREATY (PFT)
TAGS: PFOR, JA, CH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/dc7bc1bf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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